

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LIMA 00655 252318Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3454
INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

S E C R E T LIMA 0655

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PE, CI, CU, GY
SUBJECT: REPORT THAT CUBA IS ENCOURAGING PERU TO ATTACK CHILE

REF: GEORGETOWN 0138, LIMAA-002

1. WE AGREE WITH CHARGE MCCOY THAT GUYANESE FEARS OF A CUBAN MILITARY ADVENTURE IN PERU, PARTICULARLY INVOLVING GUYANA, SEEM FAR-FETCHED. AS WE HAVE REPORTED (REFAIR), WE BELIEVE A CUBAN DECISION TO INVOLVE ITSELF DIRECTLY IN ANY PERUVIAN ATTACK ON CHILE WOULD REQUIRE A CAREFUL CUBAN ASSESSMENT OF ITS OVERALL INTERESTS, INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. A RATIONAL CUBAN ASSESSMENT WOULD, WE BELIEVE, LEAD TO A DECISION NOT TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SUCH A PERUVIAN ATTACK (WHICH WE BELIEVE UNLIKELY IN ANY CASE).

2. HOWEVER, WE HAVE ALSO NOTED THAT CUBA MIGHT SEE ITS INTERESTS SERVED BY ENCOURAGING A PERUVIAN ATTACK ON CHILE THAT DID NOT INVOLVE DIRECT CUBAN ASSISTANCE. PERU/CUBAN RELATIONS HAVE BEEN COOLING FOR SOME MONTHS. THE GOP HAS BEEN ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN ROOTING OUT CUBANS AND CUBAN INFLUENCE IN GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, THE FISHING SECTOR, THE

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 LIMA 00655 252318Z

PRESS, THE FISHING SECTOR, SPORTS AND AMONG THE MILITARY FORCES. CUBA MIGHT SEE ENCOURAGEMENT OF A PERUVIAN ATTACK ON CHILE, AND COVERT AID TO PERU, AS A WAY TO RECOUP ITS LOSS OF INFLUENCE IN THIS COUNTRY.

3. WE BELIEVE THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT SEE ITS INTERESTS SERVED BY AN ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN PERU AND CHILE. WE THINK

THE SOVIETS ARE PLAYING FOR THE LONGER-TERM HERE, SEEKING TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE AMONG SECOND AND MIDDLE-LEVEL MILITARY OFFICERS IN HOPES OF A SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER FOOT-HOLD IN PERU THROUGH FUTURE MILITARY GOVERNMENTS. IF THAT APPRECIATION OF SOVIET MOTIVES IS ACCURATE, IT COULD HELP EXPLAIN WHY THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO GEORGETOWN WOULD WARN THE GUYANESE AGAINST CUBAN ACTIVITIES THE SOVIETS WOULD SEE AS RISKY.

4. WE CANNOT CONFIRM THAT CUBA IS TRAINING PERUVIAN PILOTS, AND WE DOUBT THAT ANY SUCH TRAINING, IF IT EXISTS, IS LARGE SCALE. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME CUBAN ADVISERS HELPED SOVIETS TO TRAIN PERUVIANS. DEAN

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